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For Discussion:

The Report of the Inter- ministerial Working Group on Learning Disabilities

October 1992



The Report of the Interministerial Working Group on Learning Disabilities

We invite your comments on this report.
To assist you we have included a tear-out
questionnaire at the back of the book.
Please mail it back to us **before**
January 29, 1993.

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Ce document de travail est également
disponible en français.



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October 22, 1992



Dear Friends:

As Minister Responsible for Disability Issues I am pleased to release for consultation, "The Report of the Interministerial Working Group of Learning Disabilities".

I would like to thank the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) for their ongoing willingness to assist in the development and preparation of this report. Their experience and advice has been invaluable to us. I would also like to thank the individuals who participated during the consultation process and provided written submissions sharing their personal experiences with us.

I encourage you to read and comment on this consultation paper. We have included some questions for your consideration, but please feel free to respond in any way you desire. We are hoping to receive input from you by January 29, 1993, so that we may proceed with improving access to programs and services for people with learning disabilities. Your participation is crucial in helping us achieve that goal.

Yours truly,

Elaine Ziemba
Minister of Citizenship
with responsibility for
Human Rights, Disability Issues,
Seniors' Issues and Race Relations



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REPORT OF THE INTERMINISTERIAL WORKING GROUP ON LEARNING DISABILITIES

PREFACE

FEAR

The Following is the personal account of a student with a learning disability.

*"O.K. let's all take turns in reading the following passages. Frank, you start."
An ancient response takes over the body. The hair begins to stand on end. Blood volume increases; body temperature rises. Blood is diverted from the digestive processes; a nauseous feeling develops. Pupils dilate to let in more light. The brain releases adrenalin, a stimulant. Blood sugar levels rise. More air is breathed in than out. The eyes blink more. Muscles tense. Mouth dries. You realize you can not swallow. Heart rate and blood pressure increases. The time to fight or flee has arrived. You can not do neither so your body decides to try to escape through your pores. You become drenched in your own sweat.*

All this occurs the same instant you realize that you may be called on to read aloud but you forget about this fear because you have a new one; you feel like vomiting. You desperately try to search for a safe place into which you can vomit peacefully. There is none. If you keep your head forward, you will mess up your notes. If you turn your head to either side, you will mess up your classmates. At this moment Frank starts to read. You realize that you have a few minutes to avoid death through humiliation.

You glance back to the passage that Frank is reading. He is on the third word of the second sentence. While trying to hide behind the person in front of you, you glance over to your Professor. He caught your glance which can only mean one thing--you are going to be reading next. You look at the next passage, your passage. GREAT! It is short. The time has come to be grateful for any small miracle. You scan the passage for any word that may be difficult to read. You find one in the second sentence.

You know the word; the professor just used it about five minutes ago. You close your eyes and try to concentrate which is extremely difficult. The pounding of your heart is drowning out all thoughts but the mental image of vomiting an ocean over each person in the class as they snigger at your stupidity over such an easy word. You try violently to shake the thought from your head. It is time for a deep breath.

You can see in your mind the professor saying the word. You can see your mouth pronouncing the word. At a much deeper level, one at which you cannot hear, you know the sound of the word is being produced. You cannot, unfortunately, make a connection between the word and the sound. The harder you concentrate the more garbled the sound becomes. It is time to come up with creative solutions. You relax slightly as you convince yourself that you can mumble a sound for that word quickly enough that most of the people in the class will be fooled.

You hear Frank say a phrase. Time to turn to Frank's passage to see how much time you have left. You frantically search for the passage and find it at four lines from the bottom of the paragraph. Quickly you turn back to your own passage. As you look through the six lines, which comprise your passage, you find four more words which you have trouble with.

It is time to leave the class.

"Many service providers and facilities feel that learning disabilities are an "educational problem". This is despite good knowledge that children with learning disabilities can have other difficulties in the social, behavioural, attentional and emotional areas. If one does have an auditory processing problem, this affects an individual at school, at home, in the workplace, or wherever that individual might find him or herself. It is essential that services outside of the educational system therefore, are able to recognize how such difficulties may interfere with someone's performance, and develop ways of helping, recognizing, and accommodating the existence of a learning disability. If a person with a learning disability requires assistance, it is important that services exist that can provide this in the places where the problem is occurring, not just when the child is attending school." -- Dr. W. J. Mahoney, Assistant Professor, Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Health Sciences, McMaster University

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

It has been estimated that 10% of the general population have some form of learning disability. This means that, in Ontario alone, the lives of some 500,000 adults and 300,000 children are affected.

Although educators have gradually come to accept and deal with invisible disabilities, including those which affect learning, recognition of learning disorders is not widespread outside the school system.

This problem is compounded by the fact that, until recently, most service providers and policy makers assumed that learning disabilities were primarily a children's problem. We are now increasingly aware that adults with learning disorders also encounter a variety of problems arising from their disability.

Many, for example, have trouble finding and keeping jobs. If they turn to literacy programs for help, their specific problems may not be recognized. Without accommodation, licensing examinations for some trades and professions are difficult or impossible to complete. The frustration of living with learning disabilities often leads to behavioural problems. It is a fact that teenagers and adults with learning disabilities have a disproportionately high rate of incarceration.

Many people with learning disabilities also have problems in adapting to accepted social norms. Despite average or even superior intelligence, they typically have uneven cognitive or behavioural functioning. Because of their handicap, they may appear restless and jittery, interrupt constantly, and have difficulty writing, listening, remembering a set of instructions, or maintaining eye contact.

At a time when other disability groups are preoccupied with issues like 'integration' or 'delabelling', many people with learning disabilities remain second or third class citizens whose needs are unrecognized by service delivery networks.

The concept of disability itself is, in large part, a 'social construction'. Because disabilities are protected under the 'human rights' umbrella, people with those disabilities that society has accepted, gradually gain access to a range of services and programs. People with learning disabilities are not so fortunate, despite the fact their disability is recognized in the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO), which is the provincial advocacy and service organization for this population, has repeatedly raised concerns about lack of equity faced by their consumer members. In October 1988, at the LDAO Annual General Meeting, the following motion was passed unanimously:

'That the membership approve in principle the establishment of a Provincial Task Force on Learning Disabilities with a mandate to review all significant issues relating to this population, including the status of the learning disabled adult in Ontario.'

In December of 1988, a brief was presented to the Chair of the Cabinet Committee on Social Policy, CCSP. As a result, a sub-committee of the CCSP was established under the leadership of the Minister of Education. This sub-committee met on May 4, 1989, with representatives of the LDAO, the Minister of Community and Social Services, the Minister for Disabled Persons, and representatives from the Ministries of Health and Colleges & Universities.

The Task Force, renamed the Interministerial Working Group on Learning Disabilities (WGLD), was formed in 1990 under the leadership of the Office for Disability Issues and expanded to include representatives of the ministries of Correctional Services and Skills Development. LDAO was represented in an ex-officio capacity.

The members of the Working Group on Learning Disabilities (WGLD) approached their task from the basic assumption that learning disabilities do exist and that concerted action is needed to ensure the availability of appropriate services and consistency with the intent of the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The LDAO urged that the WGLD review government policies, programs in an effort to identify exclusionary policies and practices as well as gaps in services and funding. The LDAO also recommended that the task force refrain from trying to develop its own definition of learning disabilities and that school-based educational services for children with learning disabilities not be a focus for discussion. The rationale for these recommendations was, as follows.

1. The America Interagency Committee on Learning Disabilities, which reported to the U.S. Congress in 1987, was unable to develop a satisfactory definition of learning disability, although it spent most of its time on this activity.
2. The Ontario Ministry of Education is in the process of reviewing special education terminology, including the definition of learning disabilities.
3. While there is certainly room for improvement in the delivery of educational services to children with learning disabilities, 1980 amendments to the Education Act, have resulted in more equitable access and the right to an appropriate education.

The WGLD incorporated these recommendations into its interpretation of the terms of reference (See appendix).

DEFINITIONS

Dr. Samuel Kirk is credited with having coined the term "learning disabilities" at a 1962 psychology conference in Chicago. Since then, several definitions of the condition have been proposed. Although the WGLD agreed that it would not attempt to redefine the term 'learning disability', it decided to examine issues within the context of the three existing definitions listed below. It was felt that these definitions built on each other, and as such, created a solid working framework for the WGLD.

- (i) Learning disabilities: disorders in which the main feature is a serious impairment in the development of other learning skills which are not explicable in terms of general intellectual retardation or of inadequate schooling. -- *from World Health Organization, Classification of Diseases, Vol. 9, 1975.*
- (ii) Learning disabilities is a generic term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders due to identifiable or inferred central nervous system dysfunction. Such disorders may be manifested by delays in early development and/or difficulties in any of the following areas: attention, memory, reasoning, coordination, communicating, reading, writing, spelling, calculation, social competence, emotional maturation.

Learning disabilities are intrinsic to the individual and may affect learning and behaviour in any individual, including those with potentially average, average or above average intelligence.

Learning disabilities are not due primarily to visual, hearing or motor handicaps; to mental retardation, emotional disturbance or environmental disadvantage; although they may occur concurrent with any of these. Learning disabilities may arise from genetic variation, biochemical factors, events in the pre- to post-natal period or any other subsequent events resulting in neurological impairment.-- *Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (1984). (Approved by the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario 1985)*

- (iii) A learning disorder evident in both academic and social situations that involves one or more of the processes necessary for the proper use of spoken language or the symbols of communication, and that is characterized by a condition that:
 - a) is not primarily the result of impairment of vision; impairment of hearing; physical handicap; mental retardation; primary emotional disturbance or cultural difference, and
 - b) results in a significant discrepancy between academic achievement and assessed intellectual ability, with deficits in one or more of: receptive language (i.e. listening, real language processing (i.e. thinking, conceptualizing, integrating); expressive language (i.e. talking, spelling, writing) and mathematical computations and
 - c) may be associated with one or more conditions diagnosed as: a perceptual handicap; a brain injury; minimal brain dysfunction; dyslexia or developmental aphasia. -- *The Ministry of Education (under review) 1984.*

The Working Group decided that several noneducational programs, which people with LD need to or wish to access, should be included in its review. These included programs designed for people with other types of disabilities, those specifically designed for persons with LD, and those which are generic. Also included in the review were programmes of training and education that, while generally available, may not accommodate or properly support persons with LD.

Each Ministry was invited to provide a description of the programs for which it had responsibility and which fell into any of the above categories. Members of the WGLD then reviewed these program descriptions with a view to identifying gaps in policy, service and funding.

Since the Working Group on Learning Disabilities had a relatively short time in which to complete its work, the consultation process was selective. The Working Group met with members of the LDAO, the Community College Special Needs Group, the University Special Needs Group, representatives of the Ministry of Education's demonstration schools for students with severe LD, and members of the Ministry of Education Advisory Council on Special Education.

The recommendations in this report were based on the program review and information received through the consultation process.

The Interministerial Working Group on Learning Disabilities also solicited written submissions and consulted with the public and expert groups. This process confirmed that there are significant gaps in services for people with learning disabilities and their families.

DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

MR. EMPLOYER, I'LL TELL YOU WHY YOU DIDN'T HIRE ME

**by
Lucie Milne**

"You never watched me work. In fact, you have never even seen me. The nearest that you ever came to knowing about me was a glance at my application form. I say a glance, because you couldn't read it, not much of it anyway. My writing isn't so hot, and I can't spell at all. You see, I'm a learning disabled person for whom time ran out."

"School was bad news for me - all the way. I just couldn't seem to learn in the way that the other kids did. I had a hard time learning to read and I kept getting my letters mixed up when it came to spelling. There wasn't any special help for kids like me. I got more and more behind. I felt as if I were always running for a train. Every time I thought I would catch hold of the handrail, the train would pick up speed. And finally, I couldn't run any more and the train was gone. I became a school dropout. In school nowadays, they help all the kids who are like me in special ways. But the time for such help, for me, has passed by."

"I would sure like to work in your company. I'm good with my hands. I had really good marks in the shops I took in high school before I left. I like the feel of tools, and I would work hard too. But you will never know that, because the nearest you came to knowing about me was that piece of paper that passed over the desk and into the wastepaper basket."

"I'm back on the pavement, walking - looking for a sign "HELP WANTED"! Yeah, I sure could use some help."

* * *

The Working Group found that inequity is the current reality for people with learning disabilities and those who advocate on their behalf.

Systemic discrimination against those with learning disabilities is largely the result of misunderstanding and scepticism. In practical terms, this inequity results in;

- lack of access to appropriate assessment services for adults;
- lack of focussed programming, especially in the areas of vocational training, employment and support;
- lack of access to benefits;
- lack of access to family support services such as respite care and Special Services in the Home; and
- the inability of the LDAO to secure access to funds for service delivery and advocacy.

Although the Ontario Human Rights Code specifies 'learning disabilities' as a distinct disabling condition, many Government statutes, regulations and policy statements fail to include 'learning disabilities' within their overall definition of 'disability'.

It may be that because learning disabilities are invisible, widespread scepticism about their validity persists. Whatever the reason, there are gaps in understanding and controversy over the prevalence of learning disabilities.

Early appropriate intervention, including money spent up front to deal with learning disabilities, is an investment that can result in potential future cost savings. For example, there is a strong correlation between incarceration and learning disabilities. In a 1986 study entitled 'The Learning Disabled Young Offender in Ontario Training Schools', by the Ontario Ministry of Education, A.D. Mackey and W. Moffat estimated that 10 to 12 per cent of young people with learning disabilities became incarcerated, as compared with only 2.5 per cent of the general population.

A 1976 American study by D. A. Murray, 'The Link Between Learning Disabilities and Juvenile Delinquency: Current Theory and Knowledge', painted a much more serious picture. It estimated that the incarceration rate of learning disabled juveniles was as much as 90 per cent. Whatever the true figures may be, it is clear that timely recognition and support for children with learning disabilities can help to prevent the escalation of emotional and behavioural problems which often lead to anti-social behaviour.

In 1989, school boards in Ontario identified 3.5 per cent of the total student population as being exceptional students with learning disabilities. In 1988, the Office for Disability Issues 'Statistical Profile of Disabled Persons' reported that 16 per cent of the population of Ontario had learning disabilities. These inconsistencies reflect confusion and lack of understanding about the definition of a learning disability and its application. The edges blur between what conditions constitute a 'learning disability' and what simply falls within the normal range of learning. Definitions are also influenced by changes in 'testing technology', and one test is not necessarily compatible with another.

Nevertheless, experts such as pediatrician Dr. W.J. Mahoney of McMaster University say that learning disabilities are, without doubt, the most common disabling condition affecting children, adolescents and adults. It is also expected that the incidence of learning disabilities will increase as advances in neo-natal technology result in more 'successful' premature births and a growing knowledge of how this condition correlates to fetal-alcohol syndrome.

Children with learning disabilities, for the most part, are supported in the educational system. A wide range of tests are now available to accurately identify and validate the existence of suspected learning disabilities. In accordance with the Education Act, students who are assessed as learning disabled are now entitled to special help and accommodation which enables them to perform up to their academic potential. But what happens after they finish school, or in areas of their lives that aren't directly related to school?

The Working Group found significant gaps and fragmentation in Government services for persons with learning disabilities. These are identified in the Program Summary Review section (see appendix).

Another problem is that some of the programs and policies that were designed to benefit persons with disabilities do not define learning disorders as disabilities. As a result, people with learning disabilities are excluded from eligibility and do not have equity within these programs.

In other cases, people with learning disabilities, who are theoretically eligible for certain programs, cannot benefit from them because no accommodation is made for their disability. Although this appears to be primarily due to a lack of awareness of the problem, inequity is the result.

The findings of the WGLD supported the key concerns raised by members of the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario. Although the root concern is equity, there are five primary aspects to this.

I ASSESSMENT SERVICES FOR ADULTS

The WGLD found that one of the most crucial problems facing learning disabled adults is the difficulty in being properly assessed when they attempt to obtain services. This problem is compounded by scepticism and ignorance about learning disabilities.

Despite the requirements of the Education Act, some school boards are reluctant to formally identify children with learning disabilities. Without a formal assessment and disability identification, pupils have trouble obtaining appropriate services both inside and outside the school system.

The problem is exacerbated for post-secondary students who may need up-to-date assessments. Policies with respect to who pays for these assessments, and the nature of testing, vary among community colleges and universities.

Last but by no means least, evidence of current, formal assessments are required for adults seeking access to certain government programs and services. People with learning disabilities all too frequently end up paying for their own assessments -- an out-of-pocket cost of up to \$1,000. By contrast, "proof" of other disabilities can generally be provided by a medical doctor's signature, and is therefore covered by OHIP.

II FOCUSED PROGRAMMING

The general public has a very limited understanding of "learning disabilities", because it is easy to ignore something you can't see. This compounds the isolation that people with LD and their families encounter. The public must be made aware of the causes and manifestations of learning disabilities, and the fact that the disability can be verified with testing.

Similarly, greater awareness on the part of professionals can lead to better and earlier identification of learning disabilities and the need for improved access to services. This could alleviate a great deal of suffering, and ensure that fewer individuals 'slip through the cracks'.

When adults with significant but undiagnosed learning difficulties seek help from generic literacy or skills development programs, they often discover that those who operate such programs have little or no familiarity with specific learning disabilities.

This is also true of various vocational training, employment and support programs. Generally there are no focussed programs for the trainers, counsellors or other staff of these programs. This can lead to unnecessary frustration and failure on the part of undiagnosed LD participants.

These problems could be partially remedied if those associated with these programs were trained to recognize some of the problems specific to program participants who evidence a learning disability.

III FINANCIAL BENEFITS

The social assistance safety net has also failed in its response to this population. A diagnosis of learning disability, alone, is not sufficient to qualify a person for Family Benefits/GAINS D allowance. Unless people with learning disabilities have other disabilities, or are sole support parents, they are denied access to these programs.

IV SERVICES

Learning disabilities should be identified in all pertinent statutes, regulations and policies as a distinct and separate category of disabilities. In addition to ensuring that benefits are made available to those with learning disabilities, this would be an important first step toward raising awareness.

Adults and children with learning disabilities can also experience exclusions when they seek help from specific programs. People with learning disabilities and their families have specifically cited their lack of access to the Ministry of Health's *Assistive Devices Program*, or the Ministry of Community and Social Services *Special Services in the Home*. The Assistive Devices Program does not offer ongoing access to technical support throughout life for the LD population.

In post-secondary educational facilities, assessments and labels are only useful to the extent that appropriate accommodations are available. There should be more emphasis on developing and sharing teaching strategies that work.

Recognition of the non-academic needs of persons with learning disabilities is also essential. The Special Needs Office of one community college, for example, offers a useful course on social skills.

Faculties are often reluctant to allow in-class accommodation, because of the belief that students should be as independent as possible. As a result, those students with learning disabilities attending post-secondary institutions often have a very difficult time.

V LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO (LDAO)

Many Government policies and programs, and the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) in particular, do not recognize learning disabilities as broadly as developmental and physical ones. Therefore, there has been no agreement to date to enter into fee for service agreements with LDAO for counselling and other services provided by the Association to persons with learning disabilities, even if referred by MCSS. This has in part contributed to the Association's financial difficulties.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The WGLD formulated the following recommendations after reviewing the results of its consultations with interested public and expert groups (Appendix III), summaries of government programs (Appendix I) and select background documents (Appendix II).

The recommendations fall into two categories: those areas thought to be strategic initiatives, and those which relate to specific ministries.

Recommendation 1

Strategic Initiatives

The WGLD proposes that ministries develop appropriate, concrete action plans and timetables.

Equity

That, in Government legislation, regulations, policies and programs referencing persons with disabilities, consideration be given to referencing "learning disabilities" as a distinct category of disability.

Reference is made to the following ministries, in particular:

- Education
- Colleges and Universities
- Health
- Correctional Services
- Community and Social Services
- Skills Development
- Labour
- Tourism and Recreation
- Industry, Trade and Technology
- Ministry of Citizenship, Office for Disability Issues
- Attorney General
- Housing; and

that, as part of its review to assess compatibility and compliance with the Charter of Rights and Freedom and the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Government

- review all legislation, regulations, policies, and programs to determine where references are made to persons with disabilities, in general;
- determine whether or not such legislation, regulations, policies, and programs are explicitly or implicitly exclusionary to persons with learning disabilities and/or limit access due to accommodation inequities;
- where no exclusionary elements are noted, indicate how persons with learning disabilities are accommodated;
- identify changes required to provide equity for persons with learning disabilities;

- develop an action plan to address the exclusionary issues; and,
- that the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario be recognized as an expert source of training and sensitization, and that consideration be given to purchasing training services from them in this regard.

The WGLD also makes the following recommendations with respect to specific issues as they relate to one or more ministries:

Recommendation 2

Ministry of Education/Correctional Services

- (a) That those who develop and deliver literacy programs be required to receive appropriate training about learning disabilities.
- (b) That social skills training for persons with learning disabilities be provided.

Recommendation 3

Ministry of Education/Skills Development/Correctional Services/Colleges and Universities

That a committee, led by the Ministry of Education, be formed to facilitate an agreement regarding the portability of assessments:

- (a) That any ministry or government agency which requires a formal assessment of the individual who wishes to access its services, pay for the cost of that assessment.
- (b) That appropriate mechanisms for sharing the results of assessments with other government funded programs or services be developed, but that such information only be shared or transferred with the permission of the assessed individual, in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA).
- (c) To ensure that psychological assessments for learning disabilities be conducted by duly qualified professionals, and that the results, together with any recommendations, be communicated in a way that can be clearly understood by both the client and the receiver.

Recommendation 4

Ministry of Colleges and Universities

That post-secondary facilities and service providers should be encouraged to;

(a) provide specialized English courses for persons with learning disabilities who require them; and

(b) develop and implement policies that accommodate the needs of students with learning disabilities.

Recommendation 5

Ministry of Colleges and Universities

That all community colleges and universities, which have not already done so, be encouraged to establish special needs advisory committees.

Recommendation 6

Ministry of Health

That the Ministry of Health, as part of its periodic review of the Assistive Devices Program, take into consideration the needs of persons with learning disabilities.

Recommendation 7

Ministry of Citizenship

That future Office For Disability Issues public awareness campaigns specifically address learning disabilities.

Recommendation 8

Management Board of Cabinet - Human Resources Secretariat

That information about learning disabilities (which is appropriate to the particular discipline) be used in the training and upgrading of professionals in the human service field.

Recommendation 9

Management Board of Cabinet - Human Resources Secretariat

(a) That support staff in front line 'customer service' positions in the public sector programs or services should be trained in being sensitive to persons with learning disabilities.

(b) That public sector employees whose work leads to interaction with persons with learning disabilities should be trained in the needs of learning disabled persons and made aware of the issue.

Recommendation 10

Ministry of Community and Social Services

That people with learning disabilities and their associations be given the same consideration for equal access to funding and services as other persons with disabilities and their organizations.

SETTING AN AGENDA FOR ACTION

The Ontario Government is committed to ensuring the equal participation of people with disabilities. We have entrenched the right to accommodation of disabilities through the Ontario Human Rights Code and, for people with disabilities, this includes the right to appropriate services. For those with learning disabilities, however, 'right of access to services', is still far from being a reality.

If Ontario is truly committed to the concept of equal participation for people with disabilities, that commitment must be supported with action and the equitable treatment of people with invisible disabilities.

Our findings clearly point to the need to provide people who have learning disabilities with focussed services. "Equal treatment" does not necessarily mean the "same treatment".

Concern has been expressed that a broad recognition of learning disabilities will lead to an unmanageable increase in demands for services and related costs. Demands will increase, but learning disabilities vary widely in severity. The Ministry of Education's recognition of these disabilities, coupled with early intervention, should eventually result in a decreased demand for adult services. Only the more severe conditions will need additional access to those programs delineated in the foregoing recommendations.

Although cost savings arising from prevention and early intervention will not be realized immediately, the WGLD believes that Government should take action now. Further work must be done in terms of developing a plan to manage the resulting demand for disability services.

Recommendation #1 is specifically constructed to form the basis of a Government-wide plan of action that will result in equity for people with learning disabilities. It is hoped that the expedient identification of barriers and inequities will result in their elimination.

In the best of worlds, we would have an education system that provides individualized learning for all children. When that happens, 'learning disabilities' may cease to exist. It may take its place on the curve of 'normal' human experience - like wearing glasses - but until then the problems of older children and adults which have not been addressed in the current system, will need to be addressed through initiatives such as those contained in this report.

The findings in this report, and the process by which the WGLD obtained them, are only a beginning. The WGLD feels quite strongly that the financial and human resource implications of these recommendations will have to be developed for specific Ministry programs. It is hoped that this report will act as a catalyst to facilitate positive action.

MEMBERSHIP

STEERING COMMITTEE

Mr. Clem Sauvé
Senior Adviser
Office for Disability Issues

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Assistant Deputy Minister
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Ministry of Colleges and Universities

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APPENDIX I

PROGRAM SUMMARIES

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES				
Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)	Needs-based program providing education-related funding to help students access post-secondary education		OSAP is currently reviewing its policies for students with disabilities.	Learning Disabilities are not recognized as requiring flexible arrangements.
Special Needs Allocation; Accessibility Envelope	Special funding provided to colleges of applied arts and technology and to universities to assist them to provide support services and accommodations to students with physical and learning disabilities.			Mature (continuing, part-time students) do not receive the same services; despite funding, some colleges expect students to pay for their own learning assessments; At some institutions, verification of LD (and recent assessment) required. Need for more in-class accommodation.
<p>Note: Colleges and Universities provide braille transcription, audiotape and large print services for students enrolled in the post secondary system. (see Ross MacDonald entry under Ministry of Education for further program details.) Need for more links between secondary schools and colleges and universities. Problem with inter-college portability of assessments. Need for more classes in social skills; support group and academic help could be provided through specialized English Courses for LD.</p>				

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
Employment Services	Pre-employment counselling, life skills, training, work experience services, delivered by Municipalities, and First Nation Communities to persons in receipt of social assistance.	No specific services for persons with a learning disability.	All Ministry funded employment programs are currently under review.	
Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS)	Vocational counselling, assessment and training, and job placement services and the provision of technical and assistive devices delivered by the Ministry to persons with disabilities.	Persons with learning disabilities are eligible for services.	All Ministry funded employment programs are currently under review.	Access to services for persons with learning disabilities is limited and depends on the interest and knowledge of the intake worker. No focused services for persons with learning disabilities.
Family Benefits Assistance (FBA)	Persons with permanent physical or mental disabilities, who are severely limited in the activities of daily living, or those who are considered permanently unemployable, are eligible for an income maintenance allowance under the Family Benefits Act.	Persons with learning disabilities are not considered within the meaning of the Act.	The Ministry's income maintenance legislation is currently under review.	

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES (CONT'D)

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
Young Offenders	A Plan of Care, based on a comprehensive needs assessment, must be prepared for all young offenders between the ages of 12 and 15 years. Services to Young Offenders are delivered/coordinated by Ministry probation officers and facilities and by Ministry funded agencies.	Special education is arranged for a young offenders when the assessment shows that he/she has a learning disability, where services exist.		Many young offenders have a learning disability, the services funded by MCSS do not seem to differentiate between young offenders with a learning disability and those without.
Special Services at Home and Respite Services	Respite and other services are provided by the Ministry, and Ministry funded agencies to assist the families of children or adults who have developmental disabilities and children with physical disabilities to maintain the family member in the home.	The families of people with learning disabilities are not eligible for the service.		

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES (CONT'D)

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
Child Treatment Services and Child Intervention Services	Child Treatment Services are funded by the Ministry to provide services to a child and/or to the child's family, where the child has been diagnosed by a psychiatrist as having a mental or psychiatric disorder. Treatment in both categories involves planned interventions based on multi-disciplinary professional approaches .	Services are designed to alleviate a range of social, emotional and/or behavioural problems, which may include those caused by learning disabilities, experienced by children and their families. The services include counselling, assessment and residential services.	Programs are established for the purpose of dealing with psychiatric, emotional, or behavioural problems; not with learning disabilities themselves.	There are extremely long waiting lists for Child Treatment Services and there is little in the way of crisis intervention. The programs are usually only prepared to accept children when the problem has become very serious. Even though some workers say that at least 50% of children receiving such care have learning disabilities, learning disabilities are not recorded as a primary diagnosis.
Municipal/First Nations Employment Program	Employment assessment, employment planning, resource inventory, matching clients to training or employment, follow-up.	Persons in receipt of social assistance. No specific services for persons with learning disabilities.	All Ministry funded programs are currently under review.	

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES (CONT'D)

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
The Integra Foundation	The Integra Foundation is a transfer payment agency that provides services which include counselling, therapeutic, groups, summer day camps, and a six week therapeutic residential summer camp. Most of the services are limited to persons living in Metro Toronto, with the exception of the residential camp and some training of professional persons.	Services specifically for young persons (aged 8 to 18) and their families, who exhibit emotional or behavioural problems associated with having a learning disability.	This is the only MCSS funded service provider dealing with the problems associated with learning disabilities. It is highly valued by clients, and demand for service far exceed the capacity of the organization.	

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
Provincial Schools Authority Teachers	Highly trained special education teachers provide intensive day school programs in ten adult correction facilities. Opportunities address a wide range of individual needs which can include literacy, numeracy, adult basic education, upgrading, secondary school credit courses, through to diploma completion, vocational training, and interest studies.	Any adult incarcerated at the ten facilities who requests the service. The choice to be involved and commitment to an educational program must be made with consideration of other treatment, work and interest motives of the offender.	A core program which has been in place for many years. Offenders with learning disabilities can be accommodated by the individualized and personalized programming available. A short custodial stay may hamper through diagnosis and assessment of offender with a learning disability.	Staff (Corrections and Teaching) not knowledgeable about learning disabilities.
"Section 27" Agreements	School board teachers provide a wide range of programming in academics-basic, remedial, upgrading and credit courses, as well as vocational options on a year-round basis. Program standards are consistent with all Ministry of Education policy guidelines for special education programs.	All young offenders in closed detention and custody units and those in open custody at particular locations. Adult offenders (18-21 years) at particular jail and detention centre locations.	Programs developed since the inception of Young Offenders Act and the resultant changes in Ministry of Education mandates to school boards requiring delivery of special education services and the relevant grant regulations. Over thirty programs are in place.	

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES (CON'T)

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
Volunteers in Literacy Programming	Community-based literacy groups provide literacy services to offenders within institutions and on community placement to deal with the needs of the functionally illiterate offender.	Any interested young adult offender may enter the program.	The various approaches and methodologies usually involve one-to-one tutoring and accommodate the wide range of learning difficulties that may be manifested by the illiterate student. The potential to increase this type of program delivery is being pursued.	
Continuing Education (Sponsored by Ministry of Education through local school boards)	Programs are focused on adult basic education (e.g., literacy, numeracy, and life skills with some academic upgrading credit courses). Programs provide part-time study opportunities at several facilities.	Adult offenders at several sites.	There is no regulatory requirement that school boards must provide these services. Currently, over one dozen programs are in place.	

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES (CON'T)

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
Correspondence Education	Wide range of courses for secondary school credits and of an academic nature are available. Literacy and basis English programs are available for use with students and their tutors.	Any offender of any age at any site may access these courses which are those available to the general public.	Liaison officers at institutional sites facilitate the use of these "distance education programs". Annual registration total over 1700.	

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
School Boards	In accordance with the <u>Education Act</u> , and relevant regulations, school board in Ontario must provide or enter into an agreement with another board to provide special education programs and services for their exceptional pupils, in the English language or, where French is the language of instruction, in the French language.	All resident pupils enrolled in a school is defined in the <u>Education Act</u> .	School Boards are responsible to identify exceptional pupils and to provide special education programs and special education services in English and French first languages.	Concern about services for non-English speaking LD. Concern about the 7 to 12% of children who fall between the cracks and do not get identified.
Identification Placement Review Committee (IPRC)	At the written request of a parent, an elementary or secondary school principal must refer a pupil to an IPRC. The IPRC identifies the needs of the pupil, whether or not the pupil is an exceptional pupil and recommends the placement of an exceptional pupil in a special education program.		Decisions of the IPRC may be appealed to a Special Education Appeal Board and subsequently, to a Special Education Tribunal.	Quality of assessments varies considerably from one board of education to the next.

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (CON'T)

Note: Possible changes to the special education legislation are under review. Bill 37, An Act to amend the Education Act and Certain other Acts with respect to Special Education (Special Education Statute law Amendment Act, 1992), received first reading on June 2, 1992. In addition, the Ministry is conducting an extensive consultation on integration, including a validation of revised exceptionality identifications and definitions.

Relevant Definitions:

'exceptional pupil' means a pupil whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he/she is considered to need placement in a special education program by a committee, established under sub-paragraph iii of paragraph 5 of subsection 10 (1), of the board.

'special education program' means, in respect of an exceptional pupil, and educational program that is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation and that includes a plan containing specific objectives and an outline of services that meets the needs of the exceptional pupil.

'special educational services' means facilities and resources including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing a special education program.

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (CONT'D)

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
Residential Demonstration School Programs	Three Anglophone and one Francophone residential demonstration schools provide programs to meet the needs of exceptional pupils with severe learning disabilities; provide assessment and consultation services to identified exceptional students with learning disabilities enroled in special education programs provided by school boards; and provide a variety of teacher training/professional development workshops for teachers, administrators and other interested professionals.	A provincial committee on learning disabilities reviews applications and recommends exceptional pupils with severe learning disabilities who require a residential program for admission to one of the following residential schools; Centre Jules-Léger (French); Robarts, Trillium, and Sagonaskia (English), in accordance with Policy/Program Memorandum No.89.	Pupils are admitted the first school day in September and February. Written information regarding the programs and consultative services are forwarded to school boards each fall. Consultative staff are assigned to serve school boards with in designated geographical catchment areas.	An unadvertised secret? (comment from disgruntled parent)

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (CONT'D)

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
Educational Programs in Care, Treatment, and Correctional Facilities	Where pupils cannot attend local schools due to their need for care and and/or treatment or are in custody, school boards provide educational programs in the facilities, including special education programs. The educational programs are approved and funded by the Ministry of Education in accordance with the General Legislative Grants Regulations, Policy/Program Memorandum No.85, and relevant guidelines.	School-age children and youth admitted to government approved care,treatment, correctional facilities by agencies operating under the Ministries of Health, Correctional Services or Community and Social Services.	Agreements between school-boards and facilities operated by the Ministries of Health, Corrections, and Community and Social Services are approved for funding in accordance with the General Legislative Grants Regulations.	
Transcript Services for Print Handicapped Students	The W. Ross MacDonald School, Brantford, provides audiotape, large print and braille course materials to print-handicapped elementary, secondary and post-secondary students.	A letter indicating that a student has a print disability is required for blindness, low vision, learning disabilities, or other physical impairments that affect the ability to read.	Special needs offices may determine and submit documentation, as appropriate.	Time lag in getting books can lead to student failures.

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (CONT'D)

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
Ontario Community Literacy (OCL)	To enhance the development and delivery of community-based adult basic literacy programs.	(Programs vary in intensity of LD Programming. They include people with disabilities, people with learning disabilities, offenders, visible minorities, and natives. A parallel stream of Francophone literacy programs is delivered.)		
Ontario Basic Skills (OBS)	The OBS program provides basic skills training (including literacy, numeracy, science, computers, workplace adjustment, and pre-trades for women) to adults to enable them to secure worthwhile employment and to access further skills training.		Clients need access to assessment services; staff need training in LD. Woods Gordon report (to MSD, 1988) notes research indicates 30% to 50% of all basic level adult learners have some forms of learning disabilities.	

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (CONT'D)

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
Ontario Basic Skills in the Workplace (OBSW)	Provides grants to unions and employers (and employer associations and their non-profit delivery agents) to improve basic skills of workers.		No real recognition of LD in the program development and delivery; no training on LD for literacy workers.	
Financial Support Allowance	Provides funding for participants in literacy courses in OBS programs to cover costs of transportation and childcare.			
Youth Employment Counselling Centres	Programs are designed to help unemployed young people who are socially, economically or educationally disadvantaged to develop the skills needed to gain employment.		No focussed programming for LD clients; limited training of professionals.	
Futures	Programs are designed to provide pre-employment preparation to disadvantaged young people with counselling, basic life skills and work placements to enhance their skills and employability.		Research shows high incidence of LD in client group but no special training on LD for staff.	

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (CONT'D)

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
Summer Experience in the Trades	Programs match high school students with employers in a trades related job.			
Youth Hotline	Provides no cost telephone access to information regarding all programs		Concern about the 7% to 12% of children who fall through the cracks and do not get identified mandatory screening in early years. Concern about services for non-English speaking children with learning disabilities. Quality of assessments varies considerably from one board of education to the next.	

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
Assistive Devices Program (ADP)	Funding assistance (usually 75%) for communication and visual aids, prosthetic and incontinence aids, hearing aids, ostomy supplies, orthotics, wheelchairs, mobility and seating aids, respiratory equipment, and internal feeding supplies.	Some categorise have age limits on eligibility.	Persons with learning disabilities are ineligible.	
Community Mental Health Programs	Community-based mental services to reduce admissions to psychiatric facilities, replace in-patient with out-patient treatment, reintegrate discharged patients, increase interventions and reduce the risk of mental disorder in high risk groups.		Services will deal with people disabilities, but workers often not trained in recognizing LD: training is needed. Sometimes LD goes ignored because "this is for behaviour problems." Long waiting lists and not enough crisis.	
Alcohol and Drug Dependency Program	Funds institution but also community-based programs by non-profit community boards.			

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
School Health Support Services	Allows local home care programs to provide health care to students in special education classes and those with special needs who could not otherwise attend school. Services are a shared responsibility of school boards, local Home Care Programs, and agencies under the aegis of the Ministry of Community and Social Services.	Resident pupils of school boards as described in Reg.452 of the <u>Health Insurance Act</u> and Policy and Program Memorandum No.81.	This program is provided to ensure that no pupil is denied access to a publicly-supported educational program due to a health need.	Children with learning disabilities must also have some other disability to be eligible (must meet "physical malformation" criteria). Children with learning disabilities excluded from most of these services their needs are not viewed as physical or developmental. Many children with learning disabilities desperately need speech services and occupational therapy.
Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP)	Plan underwrites all or some of the costs of eligible insured health services for all residents of Ontario.		Despite its neurological nature, LD assessments are not covered by OHIP and are left to psychologists. Recent findings are directing identification more to medical services (ie. EEGs, CAT and PET scans, etc.)	Family doctors should have knowledge about learning disabilities; need for education of school and public health nurses and VON. Hospital clinics typically do not do assessments on adults with learning disabilities.

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF LABOUR

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
Centre for Disability and Work	Referral and advice to job-seekers who are disabled, as well as informal job brokerage. Program seeks to increase job opportunities for people with disabilities by working with key participants such as job seekers, employers, labour organizations, educators, health and rehabilitation professionals and consumer organizations.		Does provide for persons with learning disabilities. Staff person with specific responsibility for learning disabilities.	
Transitions	Skills training program that provides up to \$5000 for training over two years to laid off employees aged 45 and over.		No specific focus on learning disabilities.	

PROGRAM SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Programs and Services	Description	Eligibility Criteria	Ministry Comments	Consumer Comments
Apprenticeship	This program provides structured, on-the-job and in-school, specialized training in 68 regulated occupations, and approximately 400 employer-established occupations in the construction, industrial, motive power and service sectors.		Ministry staff require information concerning learning disabilities and the employment needs of persons with disabilities. Colleges also require this information.	
<p>Note: MSD has reviewed these concerns, and subsequently has agreed to provide training sessions on learning disabilities for consulting staff, and to share information from Learning Disabilities Association with appropriate staff. MSD is also flexible in administering examinations and supporting in-school training for those with learning disabilities on an "as-needed" basis.</p>				

APPENDIX II

BACKGROUND RESOURCES

REPORTS FROM GOVERNMENT

UNITED STATES:

PRESIDENTS COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF THE HANDICAPPED; "Supervising Adults with Learning Disabilities," (7 pages, 1986)

"The Link Between Learning Disabilities and Juvenile Delinquency: Current Theory and Knowledge", by D.A. Murray, 1976.

CANADA:

EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION CANADA;

"The Job Accommodation Network in Canada: Accommodating Disabled Persons on the Job" pamphlet, 1989

NOVA SCOTIA:

"Learning Disabled Students in the Nova Scotia Public School System," by the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Feb. 1990

ONTARIO:

MINISTRY OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES;

Vision 2000: Quality and Opportunity. A Summary, The Final Report of Vision 2000 A Review of the Mandate, 1990

College Committee on Special Needs: Special Needs Statistical Report, April 1, 1989 to March 31, 1990. May 1990, Data Collections Sub-Committee. Chair: David Robertson.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, MINISTRY OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES;

Report on Special Education Pilot Project, April 1990. (Pilot project - course for those dealing with special education - at Faculty of Education, Department of Continuing Studies, Brock University.)

Report by David Robertson, Co-ordinator, Counselling and Special Needs, Centennial College, Central Region Representatives, College Committee on Special Needs.

MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION, HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES;

Interministerial Guidelines for the Provision of Speech and Language Services, September 1988.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION;

"The Learning Disabled Young Offender in Ontario Training Schools", by D.A.Murray and W. Moffat, 1986.

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 81: July 19, 1984: "Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings."

Memorandum: Revised 1982, Policy Memorandum # 8, Learning Disabilities.

Memorandum: August 14, 1989: "Catheterization and Suctioning: Clarification of Policy/Program Memorandum No. 81, Model for Provision of School Health Support Services, Group III"

Memorandum: Revised 1982, Policy Memorandum # 11, Early Identification of Children's Learning Needs.

Memorandum: Sept. 29, 1988, Policy Memorandum # 54. Ministry of Education Training Programs for Teachers.

Memorandum: Feb. 6, 1990. Policy Memorandum # 89. The Residential Demonstration Schools For Students with Learning Disabilities: General Information and Details of the Referral Process.

Memorandum: April 18, 1988. To Regional Directors of Education, Application Procedures for Admission to Demonstration Schools.

Brochures on Residential Demonstration Schools

- 1) Ministry of Education, Education for Pupils with Special Needs, 1987. Learning Disabilities, 1987. The Trillium School.
- 2) Sagonaska School, Belleville, Ontario. Programs and Services.
- 3) The Robarts School, London. A Regional Resource Centre for Communication Exceptionalities; The Residence Counsellor; Professional Development Opportunities At the Robarts School, London; Robarts Demonstration School Program: Learning Disabled.

Brochure: A Parent Guide to Special Education Services, Education for Every Child. The Bruce-Grey County, Roman Catholic Separate School Board.

Brochure: A Parent's Guide to Special Education, The Sudbury Board of Education.

MINISTRIES OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM AND RECREATION, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES;
Human Resource and Training Needs in Ontario's Hospitality Industry, 1990.

OFFICE FOR DISABILITY ISSUES

Guide To Ontario Government Programs & Services for Persons with Disabilities, Queen's Printer for Ontario, 1990

LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATIONS:

LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA;

LDA Eligibility Position Paper and Supporting Documents, 1990

LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF NORTH PEEL;

(Report of) Pilot Employment Program, 1990 (30 pages)

Resource Guide, 1989 (48 pages)

Resource Guide Research Study, Nov. 1989 (21 pages)

Newsletter, November 1990

LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO;

Electronic Library: A computerized list of specific resource information (from LDAO library)

Document: "Input to the Provincial Task Force on Learning Disabilities," August 1990, 8 pages

Document: "Proposed Provincial Task Force on Learning Disabilities, More for Less: Strategic Planning," April 1989, 3 pages.

OTHERS:

Bridges magazine, vol. 7, spring 1990. (Article "Dyslexia," page 12.)

Cambrian College (Sudbury): package of information from Academic Support Programs Division; Adaptive Curriculum, English

Canadore College (North Bay): informative pamphlets & student guide for LD students

Computer printouts from Metropolitan Toronto Library on LD sources

"Identifying Alterable Patterns in Employment Success for Highly Successful Adults with Learning Disabilities," executive summary, by Paul Gerber, Rick Ginsberg and Henry Reiff. (School of Education, Virginia Commonwealth University, Oct. 1990). Also, more complete version in "final draft," undated, submitted to Journal of Learning Disabilities)

Integra Study of the Mental Health Needs of Children and Youth with Learning Disabilities in Metropolitan Toronto, 1991 (52 pages plus appendices). Also, Summary Report of Integra Study (23 pages)

"S.O.L.D. A Futures Model for Successful Employment." Draft March 1st, 1988. Study prepared by Susan Shannon, conducted by St. Lawrence College Saint-Laurent, Brockville Campus. (funded by the Ministry of Skills Development.)

The Wellesley Learning Disabilities Program: covering letter to Tim Nichols from Penny Chapman, June 25, 1990 and "Proposal for Financial Support for the Wellesley Programme for Children with Motor Handicaps."

York University, "Modified Admission Procedures for Students with Learning Disabilities," Sept., 1990, (with covering letter) 2 pages

APPENDIX III

WORKING GROUP SPECIAL CONSULTATIONS

OCT. 28, 1990: LDAO Annual General Meeting

NOV. 20, 1990: Presentation at provincial committee of the college committee on special needs

JAN. 21, 1991: Working Group at meeting of inter-university association on special needs

JAN. 25, 1991: Working Group consultation at meeting of the Ministry of Education Advisory Council on Special Education

APPENDIX IV

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

1. Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston, Dec. 8, 1990
2. Learning Disabilities Association of London Middlesex, Oct. 1990
3. Learning Disabilities Association of Peterborough, Dec. 11, 1990
from Coordinator of Resource Centre
4. Letter from assistant professor of pediatrics at McMaster University.
5. Letter from Trent Valley Literacy Association, Peterborough, Dec. 11, 1990
6. Letter from an adult with learning disabilities, Oct. 19, 1990, accompanied by a letter from the adult's mother.
7. Letter with no return address, Dec. 19, 1990
8. Letter from parent of student with learning disabilities, Jan. 14, 1991
9. Letter from parents of student with learning disabilities, Kemptville, Dec. 3, 1990
10. Letter from parents of child with learning disabilities, St. Catharines, undated.
11. Letter from father of child with learning disabilities. eight pages, undated, no return address.
12. Letter from pediatric psychiatry consultant, chief of psychiatric services at Joseph Brant Hospital in Burlington. Nov., 5, 1990.
13. Letter from professor of developmental neuro-psychiatry, University of Western Ontario, Nov. 7, 1990.

From written submissions to the Working Group:

"A mother was standing looking at our library and crying. She said 'Why did no one tell me there was information for me. I was so alone.' And she listed the professionals she had been to." -- Betty Borg, Coordinator, Learning Disabilities Association of Peterborough.

APPENDIX V

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The following objective, tasks and timeframe were announced by the Minister for Disabled Persons in February, 1990.

Objective

The Working Group on Learning Disabilities, WGLD, will investigate the availability and accessibility of provincial government services for the benefit of adults and children with learning disabilities by identifying where there are services gaps and/or duplications, and how well existing services are meeting those needs.

This will be undertaken with the understanding that in the present fiscal climate, it is not anticipated that new funds will be available and that any identified gaps would have to be covered, to the extent possible, by redeployment of existing funds and programs.

Tasks

1. Determine working definitions of and for learning disabilities.
2. Determine need and scope of services required by persons with learning disabilities.

What Government is doing:

3. Review outstanding issues.
4. Identify relevant existing programs and services.
5. Determine access to programs and services for adults and children with learning disabilities by looking at eligibility criteria, targeting of funds, support services and resource materials.
6. Determine availability of programs and services.
7. Conduct assessment of gaps in services.

What Government should be doing:

8. Carry out a community consultation process in which groups will be invited to offer their own priorities and concerns related to the issues that have been identified.
9. Review the recommendations from the community.
10. Develop and draft a report with findings, recommendations and a timetable for action.

Timeframe

The working group was initially expected to complete its task by January 1991.

The timeframe was amended to accommodate the need for the initial round of consultations.

WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU ...

1. The overall direction taken in this paper focuses on the right of people with learning disabilities to access services and programs focused on persons with disabilities. Do you have comments on this approach?
2. Do you have any comments related to any specific recommendations?
3. With regard to these recommendations, what are the most important priorities to be addressed?
4. Are there key issues not addressed in this consultation paper?
5. Do you have other general comments or recommendations on this subject for the Government, the Working Group, or the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario, regarding the issues raised in this report?

If you would like, please provide the following information:

- _____ a person with a learning disability
- _____ a family member of a person with a learning disability
- _____ a professional working in the field of learning disability
- _____ other (please specify) _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Please send your reply by January 29, 1993 to:

Chair, Working Group on Learning Disabilities
Office for Disability Issues
700 Bay Street, 3rd Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M5G 1Z6

Fax: (416) 327-4080

